

Guide to Buddhist Pali Chanting

Ven. Weragoda Sarada Maha Thero

GUIDE TO BUDDHIST PĀLI CHANTING

**BY
VEN. WERAGODA SARADA MAHA THERO**

**PUBLISHED BY
THE SINGAPORE BUDDHIST MEDITATION CENTRE
NO. 1, JALAN MAS PUTEH
SINGAPORE 128607
TEL: 67783330 FAX: 67730150
E-MAIL; weragodas@yahoo.com.sg
URL: www.buddhist-book.com
ISBN: 981 - 05 - 4088 - 4**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

“Sabba Dānaṃ Dhamma Dānaṃ Jināti”
“The Gift of Truth Excels All Other Gifts”

This book
“Guide to Buddhist Pali Chanting”
is sponsored by
Ms. Ronasari Dharmali
to confer eternal blessings
to her beloved parents
Mr. Sinadu Dharmali
and
Mdm. Daryanti Sutanto.

May the merits accruing from the sponsorship
and the blessings of the Triple Gems
shower good health, happiness and prosperity
upon members of Dharmali family.

Ven. Weragoda Sarada Maha Thero
08.08.05

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| The Discourse on Great Blessings (Mahā Maṅgala Sutta)..... | 1 |
| The Jewel Discourse (Ratana Sutta) | 10 |
| Discourse on Loving-Kindness (Metta Sutta)..... | 31 |
| Vandanā | 48 |
| Offerings (Pūjā) | 57 |
| Veneration | 62 |
| Transference of Merits | |
| Aspiration | |
| Forgiveness | |
| Devotional Verses | 67 |
| Stanzas of Victory (Jaya maṅgala gāthā) | |
| Verses for taking Refuge in the Triple Gem | |
| Nine Great Virtues of the Buddha (Nava Guna Gāthā) | |
| Teacher's Guide | 82 |

**THE DISCOURSE ON
GREAT BLESSINGS**

**MAHĀ MAṄGALA
SUTTA**

THE DISCOURSE ON GREAT BLESSINGS MAHĀ-MANĠALA SUTTA

Evam me sutam ekam samayam Bhagavā
Sāvattiyam viharati Jetavane Anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāme
atha kho aññatarā devatā abhikkantāya rattiya abhikkanta
vaṇṇā kevalakappam Jetavanam obhāsetvā yena bhagavā
tenupasamkamī upasamkamitvā bhagavantam abhivādetvā
ekamantam aṭṭhāsi ekamantam thitā kho sā devatā
Bhagavantam gāthāya ajjhabhāsi:-

Thus have I heard: On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at the monastery of Anāthapiṇḍika in Jeta's Grove near Sāvattī. When the night was far spent, a certain deity, whose surpassing splendour illuminated the entire Jeta Grove, came to the presence of the Blessed One, and drawing near, respectfully saluted and stood at one side. Standing thus, He addressed the Blessed One.

Evam – thus

me – by me

sutam – heard

ekam samayam – One occasion

Bhagavā – the Blessed One

Sāvattiyam viharati – was living near the city of Sāvattī

Jetavane – in the Jeta Grove

Anāthapiṇḍikassa – in Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery

atha kho – at that time

aññatarā devatā – a certain deity

abhikkantāya rattiya – during the late hours of the night

abhikkanta vaṇṇā – of exceeding glory

kevalakappam Jetavanam – The whole of Jetavana monastery

obhāsetvā – having illuminated

yena bhagavā – where the Blessed One was
tenupasaṇ kami – there he came
upasaṇkamitvā – having come there
bhagavantam abhivādetvā – having saluted Him with deep
respect
ekamantaṃ aṭṭhāsi – stood aside
ekamantaṃ thitā kho – having stood at aside
sā devatā – that deity
Bhagavantam – to the Blessed One
gāthāya – a verse
ajjhabhāsi – addressed

1. Bahū devā manussā ca
Maṅgalāni acintayum
Ākaṅkhamānā sotthānam
Brūhi maṅgala muttamam

Many deities and men,
yearning after good,
having pondered on Blessings
Pray, tell me the Highest Blessing

bahū – many
devā – deities
manussā ca – and human beings
maṅgalāni – blessings
acintayum – have pondered
Ākaṅkhamāna – (are) expecting
sotthānam – solution
brūhi – please explain
maṅgala muttamam – the highest blessings

2. **Asevanā ca bālānaṃ;**
 Paṇḍitānañ ca sevanā
 Pūjā ca pūja nīyānaṃ;
 Etaṃ maṅgala muttamam

Not to associate with the fools,
To associate with the wise,
and honour those who are worthy of honour
This is the Highest Blessing.

asevanā ca – Not to associate with
bālānaṃ – the ignorant ones
paṇḍitānañ ca – but the wise ones
sevanā – associate with
pūjā ca – honour
pūja nīyānaṃ – those worthy of honour
Etaṃ maṅgala muttamam – this is the highest blessing

3. **Patirūpa desa vāso ca;**
 Pubbe ca kata puññatā
 Atta sammā pañīdhi ca;
 Etaṃ maṅgala muttamam

To reside in a suitable locality
to have done meritorious actions in the past,
and to set oneself in the right course.
This is the Highest Blessing.

patirūpa – congenial
desa – place
vāso ca – residing
pubbe ca – in the past

kata puññatā – having acquired merit
atta – one's self
sammā– well
pañidhi ca – directed

4. **Bāhu saccañ ca sippañ ca;**
Vinayo ca susikkhito
Subhāsītā ca yā vācā;
Etaṃ maṅgala muttamam

Vast-learning, perfect handicraft,
being well-trained and disciplined,
and pleasant speech –
This is the Highest Blessing.

bāhu – Extensive
saccañ ca – learning
sippañ ca – proficiency in arts and crafts
vinayo ca – disciplined
susikkhito – restrained
subhāsītā – well- spoken
yā vācā – words

5. **Mātāpitū upaṭṭhānam;**
Putta-dārassa saṅgaho
Anākulā ca kammantā;
Etaṃ maṅgala muttamam

The support of father and mother,
The cherishing of wife and children,
and unblemished occupations
This is the Highest Blessing.

mātāpitū – parents
upaṭṭhānaṃ – caring well
putta-dārassa – children and spouse
saṅgaho – cherishing
anākulā ca – unblemished
kammantā - livelihood

6. **Dānañ ca dhamma-cariyā ca;**
Ñātakānañ ca saṅgaho
Anavajjāni kammāni;
Etaṃ maṅgala muttamam

Liberality, righteous conduct,
rendering assistance to relatives,
and performance of blameless actions.
This is the Highest Blessing.

dānañ ca - generosity
dhamma-cariyā ca – righteous in behaviour
ñātakānañ - relatives
saṅgaho – caring for
anavajjāni - blameless
kammāni - actions

7. **Ārati virati pāpā;**
Majja-pānā ca saññāmo
Appa-mādo ca dhammesu;
Etaṃ maṅgala muttamam

To cease and abstain from evil.
To abstain from intoxicating drinks, and
be diligent in performing righteous acts.
This is the Highest Blessing.

arati – avoiding
virati – abstinence
pāpa – (from) evil
majjapānā ca – intoxicating drinks
saññāmo – refrain from
appa mādo ca – diligence in
dhammesu – righteous behaviour

8. **Gāravo ca nivāto ca;
Santuṭṭhī ca kataññutā
Kālena dhamma savanam;
Etaṃ maṅgala muttamam**

Reverence, humility,
Contentment, gratitude,
And opportune hearing of the Dhamma –
This is the Highest Blessing.

gāravo ca – Reverence
nivāto ca – humility
santuṭṭhī – contentment
kataññutā – gratitude
kālena – timely
dhamma savanam – listening to the Dhamma

9. **Khantī ca sovacassatā;
Samanānañca dassanam
Kālena dhamma sākacchā;
Etaṃ maṅgala muttamam**

Patience, obedience - Seeing the Samanas (ascetics)
And religious discussions at due season –
This is the Highest Blessing.

khaṇṭī – patience

sovacassatā – obedience

Samanānañca – of religious persons

dassanaṃ – seeing

Kālena – timely

dhamma sākaṇṇā – discussion of Dhamma

10. Tapo ca brahma-cariyañca;

Ariya saccāna dassanaṃ

Nibbāṇa sacchi kiriyā ca;

Etaṃ maṅgala muttamaṃ

Self-control, Holy Life

Perception of the Noble Truths,

And the realisation of Nibbana –

This is the Highest Blessing.

tapo ca – austerity

brahma-cariyañca – holy and chaste life

ariya saccāna – the Noble Truths

dassanaṃ – studying in-depth

Nibbāṇa sacchi kiriyā – realization of Nibbana

11. Putṭhassa loka-dhammehi;

Cittaṃ yassa na kampaṭi

Asokaṃ virajaṃ khemaṃ;

Etaṃ maṅgala muttamaṃ

He whose mind does not flutter.

By contact with worldly vicissitudes,

Sorrowless, Stainless, and Secure –

This is the Highest Blessing.

puṭṭhassa – touched by
loka-dhammehi – worldly vicissitudes
cittaṃ yassa – whose mind
na kampati – is not shaken
asokaṃ – sorrowless
virajaṃ – free from blemishes
khemaṃ – highly secure

12. Etā-disāni katvāna;
Sabbattha maparājita
Sabbattha sotthiṃ gacchanti taṃ;
Tesaṃ maṅgala muttamam 'ti

To them, fulfilling matters such as these,
Everywhere invincible,
In every way moving happily –
These are the Highest Blessings.

etā-disāni – these things
katvāna – having fulfilled
sabbattha – everywhere
aparājita – unvanquished
sotthiṃ – happiness and tranquility
gacchanti – they attain
tesaṃ maṅgala muttamam – that then is the highest blessing

**THE JEWEL
DISCOURSE
RATANA SUTTA**

THE JEWEL DISCOURSE RATANA SUTTA

1. **Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni;
Bhummāni vā yāniva antaḷikkhe
Sabbe va bhūtā sumanā bhavantu;
Atho'pi sakkacca sunantu bhāsitaṃ**

May all non-human beings, terrestrial beings and heavenly beings assembled here, be tranquil in mind. May they listen attentively to these words.

yānīdha – here, in this place
samāgatāni – assembled
bhūtāni – non-human beings
bhummāni vā – and terrestrial deities
yāniva antaḷikkhe – those dwelling in heaven
sabbe va bhūtā – all such beings
sumanā bhavantu – be of tranquil mind
atho'pi sakkacca – that way having become serene
sunantu – please listen
bhāsitaṃ – those words

2. **Tasmā hi bhūtā nisāmetha sabbe;
Mettaṃ karotha mānusiya pajāya
Divā ca ratto ca haranti ye balim;
Tasmā hi ne rakkhatha appa-mattā**

In consequence, all you beings, please listen attentively. Please extend loving-kindness to the human kind. Humans present you offerings day and night. Therefore, please protect human beings diligently.

tasmā hi – in consequence; therefore

bhūtā – you beings

nisāmetha sabbe – may you all listen to me

mettaṃ karotha – extend loving-kindness

mānusiya pajāya – towards the human kind

You must pity them, as they are afflicted with drought, disease and threats from demons.

divā ca ratto ca – day and night

haranti ye baliṃ – make you offerings

This refers to the practice of people to make offerings to various beings, in forests, at the foot of trees, in cemeteries, in front of the images of deities, and in temples and places of worship they have built.

tasmā hi – therefore because of the above-mentioned offerings they make to those non-human beings.

ne rakkhatha – please look after them: please protect them.

appamattā – diligently – constantly without let up.

This stanza is a plea. Since human beings are kind to the non-human beings and make them a variety of offerings, they are asked to protect humans, diligently, constantly – always.

*The totality of the Jewel Discourse is structured like an Act of Truth. An Act of Truth, is pleading for the fulfilment of wishes, through the power of some truth that is meditated upon. When some beneficial, good and harmless result is expected, the truth that is meditated upon must be a benevolent truth. The primary purpose of the Jewel Discourse (**Ratana Sutta**) is to contemplate on the truth of the sacred qualities of the Buddha, Dhamma and the Sangha. By virtue of the truth that these qualities are supreme and transcendental, some good result is wished.*

The first two stanzas of this Discourse are a brief admonition – a piece of guidance and advise – before the Discourse proper begins.

The blessings begin with the third stanza.

3. **Yaṃ kiñci vittaṃ idha vā huraṃ vā;
Saggesu vā yaṃ ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ
Na no samaṃ atthi Tathāgatena;
Idam'pi Buddhhe ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu**

If, in the world of humans, or in other worlds, or in heavenly abodes if some treasure is considered valuable or a jewel, none such treasures can be compared to the Buddha Jewel. This is unparalleled Jewel-quality of the Buddha. This is the truth. May benefits take place due to the power of that Truth.

Yaṃ kiñci vittaṃ – Whatever treasurer
idha vā – either here in this world
huraṃ vā – or in any other world
saggesu vā yaṃ – or even in blessed abodes – heavens
ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ – exists in the form of an invaluable jewel
na no samaṃ atthi – that is not comparable to
Tathāgatena – the Supreme Buddha
etena saccena – because of this Truth
suvatthi hotu – may beneficial results occur

Earthlings – worldly folk – tend to consider gold, silver, pearls, such precious stones as rubies, emeralds, sapphires or diamonds to be valuable jewels. Some consider lands, houses, vehicles to be jewels. There are also those who think that there are no higher jewels than food, intoxicating drinks and such other things.

To some, wives and children are jewels. For a king there could be no other jewel than his kingdom. A universal monarch has such special jewels as the jewel – Wheel. Divine beings in the six celestial abodes have such jewels as the wish-fulfilling tree, the celestial cow, the wish-conferring gems, etc. In the world of Brahmas, too, there are some objects considered to be jewels. But none of these can be compared to the Supreme Buddha jewel – the Enlightened Buddha, who declared the path to Liberation through His limitless loving-kindness towards all beings. It is said that, if the Buddha were to live for an aeon, talking only about the qualities of a Buddha, the aeon will pass away, but the qualities of the Buddha will not get exhausted. No such wise person exists in the whole universe who is capable of challenging this Truth. May benefits occur due to the truth of that jewel-quality of the Buddha.

4. **Khayaṃ virāgaṃ amataṃ paṇītaṃ;
Yadajjhagā Sakyamunī samāhito
Na tena Dhammena samatthi kiñci;
Idam’pi Dhamme ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu**

Buddha, the Sakya Sage, realized the Supreme Nibbana – the eternal Blessing – which destroys the blemishes – which does not allow passion to rise again, and which is immortal. There is no other jewel parallel to that noble Nibbana, in the whole universe. This is the jewel-quality of the Nibbana. May benefits occur due to the truth of that jewel-quality of Nibbana.

khayaṃ virāgaṃ – having eradicated the blemishes, reaching the passionless state

amatam paṇītam – the great state of deathlessness
yadajjhagā Sakyamunī samāhito – The Sage of the Sakya clan,
with the tranquil mind
na tena Dhammena samatthi kiñci – There is no other
phenomenon that can equal Nibbana – the eternal Blessing.

5. Yaṃ Buddhasettṭho parivaṇṇayī sucim
Samādhi mānantari kañña māhu
Samādhinā tena samo na vijjati;
Idam’pi Dhamme ratanam paṇītam;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu

There is no other tranquillity similar to the tranquillity obtained after the acquisition of the fruits of sainthood. This tranquillity is praised by the Great Buddha as being absolutely pure. This is the jewel-quality of Nibbana—the eternal Blessing. This is the Truth. May benefits occur due to the power of this Truth.

yaṃ Buddhasettṭho parivaṇṇayī – which has been practiced by the Great Buddha

sucim – absolutely pure, as it is totally bereft of blemishes
samādhi mānantari kam – The state of deep tranquillity attained after reaching the fruits of sainthood.

The state of tranquillity attained after the reaching of the fruits of sainthood, does not get disturbed again, under any circumstance.

samādhinā tena samo na vijjati – There is no other tranquillity comparable to the tranquillity reached after the attainment of the fruits of Sainthood.

6. **Ye puggalā aṭṭha satam pasatthā;**
Cattāri etāni yugāni honti
Te dakkhiṇeyyā Sugatassa sāvakā;
Etesu dinnāni mahapphalāni;
Idam’pi Saṅghe ratanam paṇītam;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu

Taken in groups of two, there are four forms of noble disciples of the Buddha. Virtues of these disciples have been extolled by greater beings. These disciples of the Buddha are worthy of being offered alms. Offering alms to them yields high result. This is the great jewel-quality of the Brotherhood. May benefits occur due to this truth.

ye puggalā aṭṭha – these are eight noble persons

satam pasatthā – they are praised by great beings

cattāri etāni yugāni honti – taken in groups of two, there are four types.

These four groups are:

1. *Those who have entered the path of stream-winner state and those who have won the stream-winner state*

2. *Those who have entered the path of once-returner state and those who have won the once-returner state.*

3. *Those who have entered the path of non-returner state and those who have won the non-returner state.*

4. *Those who have entered the path of arahanthood and those who have attained arahanthood.*

te dakkhiṇeyyā – those who deserve to be offered alms

sugatassa sāvakā – Disciples of the Buddha

etesu dinnāni mahapphalāni – Great results accrue when offerings are made to the noble eight-fold persons.

7. **Ye suppayuttā manasā dalhena;
Nikkāmino Gotama sāsanaṃhi
Te patti pattā amataṃ vigayha;
Laddhā mudhā nibbutiṃ bhuñjamānā
Idaṃ'pi Saṅghe ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ;
Etena saccena suvathi hotu**

There are several characteristics of the noble members of the Brotherhood. They have unswerving determination to attain the total tranquillity of mind. They eradicate blemishes without considering their body and life. They practice the virtues advocated by the Teachings of the Buddha. They attain sainthood and experience the bliss of Nibbana, received free. May the jewel-quality of the Sangha confer benefits.

ye suppayuttā – those who have deployed themselves well, directing their minds towards the attainment of insight
manasā dalhena – with utmost determination to attain tranquillity

nikkāmino Gotama sāsanaṃhi – they have fully dedicated themselves to the task of following the Teachings of Gotama Buddha

te patti pattā amataṃ vigayha – those noble members of the Brotherhood who have attained Nibbana, reaching sainthood (arahathood)

laddhā mudhā – without any expenditure – free

nibbutiṃ bhuñjamānā – experience the bliss of Nibbana

8. **Yathindakhīlo paṭhaviṃ sito siyā;
Catubbhi vātebhi asampa-kampiyo
Tathū-pamaṃ sappurisaṃ vadāmi;
Yo ariyasaccāni avecca passati**

**Idampi Saṅghe ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ;
Etena saccena suvathi hotu**

The solid pillar driven firmly into the ground remains unshaken by the winds blowing from the four directions. Similarly, the noble person, who has realized the noble Truths remains unshaken by anything, whatsoever. May benefits occur due to this jewel-quality of the Brotherhood.

yathindakhīlo paṭhaviṃ sito siyā – Just as the solid pillar, driven firmly into the earth

In ancient India, a strong pillar was driven about eight or ten feet deep into the earth, either to make the city-bounding or else to hold the main gate to the city. This does not shake in any kind of strong wind. “Indakhila” can be simply described as an unshaken firm pillar. In the modern world this kind of pillar is not used to make a city-bounding.

catubbhi vātebhi asampa-kampiyo – remains unshaken by the winds from four directions.

tathū-pamaṃ sappurisaṃ vadāmi, Yo ariyasaccāni avecca passati – Those who have realized the Four Noble Truths, also remain unshaken by anything just like the solid pillar. Those who have attained Nibbana cannot be shaken by any of the eight vicissitudes of life.

**9. Ye ariyasaccāni vibhāva yanti;
Gambhīra paññena sudesitāni
Kincāpi te honti bhusappa mattā;
Na te bhavaṃ aṭṭhamam ādiyanti
Idam’pi Saṅghe ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu**

The person who has won the stream-winner state, and makes an effort to realize the Four Noble Truths, declared well

by the Supreme Buddha, after understanding them through deep wisdom, may be a little delayed in his attainment of Nibbana, but he will not linger in the ocean of existence, until the eighth birth. May this Truth of the noble Brotherhood, bring about benefit.

gambhīra-paññena sudesitāni – the Buddha realized with His all-knowing wisdom and declared well.

ariyasaccāni vibhāva-yanti – The person who has realized the Four Noble Truths, removing the darkness of blemishes.

kincāpi te honti bhusappamattā – the attainment of sainthood – arahanthood – is slightly delayed

na te bhavaṃ aṭṭhamam ādiyanti – will be reborn only less than eight times – he will not be reborn for the eighth time

The person who has attained the stream-winner status will realize Nibbana within seven re-births. He will attain sainthood at the seventh rebirth and will realize Nibbana. He will not be reborn an eighth time.

10. **Sahā vassa dassana sampadāya;
Tayassu dhammā jahitā bhavanti
Sakkāya diṭṭhi vici kicchi-tañca;
Sīlabbatam vāpi yadatthi kiñci
Catū-hapāyehi ca vippa mutto;
Cha cābhi ṭhanāni abhabbo kātum
Idam’pi Saṅghe ratanam pañītam;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu**

The person who has attained the fruit of stream-winner state, will eradicate the three fetters: **Sakkāya diṭṭhi**, **Vicikicchā**, and **Sīlabbata parāmāsa**. He will never be reborn in any of the four evil states. He will never commit the six grave evil deeds. This is a noble jewel-quality of the noble Brotherhood. May this Truth confer benefits.

sahā vassa dassana sampadāya – the person who has a clear vision enabling him to attain the stream-winner state.

tayassu dhammā jahitā bhavanti – three of the fetters will be eradicated.

There are ten fetters that obstruct a person's attainment of Nibbana. At the attainment of the state of stream-winner, three of these get eradicated.

sakkāya diṭṭhi – wrong view about one's body.

The mistaken notion that the body, or the form, is the soul.

vicikicchā – sceptical doubt

This is the doubt that occurs about the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Brotherhood (Sangha), this birth, the next birth, the effects of kamma and Nibbana. At the attainment of the stream-winner state, these doubts get eradicated.

sīlabbata parāmāsa – the belief that, by the practice of self-mortification, by torturing one's body – *the extreme indulgence of the senses, and other forms of rites and rituals, liberation can be achieved. The person who has attained stream-winner state, will not practice false rites and rituals.*

yadatthi kiñci – **Sakkāya diṭṭhi** is eradicated through the proper awareness of the Truth of suffering, **vicikicchā** (sceptical doubt) is eradicated through the proper vision of the Truth of the arising of suffering, and through the proper vision of the path, **sīlabbata parāmāsa** gets eradicated.

catū-hapāyehi ca vippa-mutto – the stream-winner will not be reborn in any one of the four evil states – namely, hell, animal state, evil spirit state, and asura state.

cha cābhi ṭhanāni abhabbo kātum – the stream-winner is not able to commit six grave evil deeds. These six are matricide, patricide, killing a saint, drawing blood from the Buddha's body (**lohituppada**), bringing about dissension among the Sangha, and **annasattha – niddesa kamma**.

11. **Kiñcāpi so kammaṃ karoti pāpakam;**
Kāyena vāca uda cetasā vā
Abhabbo so tassa paṭicchā-dāya;
Abhabbatā diṭṭha padassa vuttā
Idam'pi Saṅghe ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu

If the stream-winner were to commit even a minor crime by body, word or mind, in error, he will not conceal it. It is declared that it is not proper to conceal evil deeds. This is a jewel-quality of the Sangha – Brotherhood. May this Truth bring about benefits.

kāyena vāca uda cetasā vā – either by body, word or mind.

Kiñcāpi so kammaṃ karoti pāpakam – even if the slightest evil deed is committed

abhabbo so tassa paṭicchā-dāya – he is not capable of concealing even the slightest evil deed committed by him

abhabbatā diṭṭha padassa vuttā – the Buddha has declared that it is not fit for a person who has entered the path to Nibbana to commit any evil deed, or break any rite or ritual.

12. **Vanappa gumbe yathā phussitagge;**
Gimhāna māse paṭhamasmiṃ gimhe
Tathūpamaṃ Dhamma varaṃ adesayi
Nibbāna gāmiṃ paramaṃ hitāya
Idam'pi Buddhhe ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu

In the first month of summer the forest is resplendent and comely with blossoms. The Supremely Enlightened Buddha declared a noble doctrine about the equally alluring Nibbana – Eternal Bliss. May benefit accrue through this True power of the Buddha jewel.

gimhāna māse paṭhamasmiṃ gimhe – In the first month of summer

Immediately after spring, summer arrives. At its onset trees are alluring with attractive blossoms. The weather is mild and appealing.

vanappa gumbhe – a forest grove, with trees and creepers entwined together

yathā phussitagge – the trees bear blossoms on the top.

This kind of sight tends to soothe the mind

tathūpamaṃ nibbāna gāmiṃ Dhamma varam adesaṃ paramaṃ hitāya – Nibbana is similar to such a wondrous sight.

The Buddha preached a Doctrine leading to Nibbana. It is universally beneficial.

**13. Varo varaññū varado varāharo;
Anuttaro Dhamma varam adesaṃ;
Idam’pi Buddhhe ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu**

The Supremely Enlightened Buddha preached in His Greatness, an unsurpassed Doctrine, which knows Nibbana. May this Truth confer benefits upon all.

varo – noble, great

varaññū – which confers liberation upon beings

varado – directing towards a noble way of life

varāharo – that takes beings along to the noble state of Nibbana

anuttaro Dhamma varam adesayi – He preached a Doctrine of unparalleled greatness

14. **Khīṇaṃ purāṇaṃ navaṃ natthi sambhavaṃ;**
Viratta cittā āyatike bhavasmiṃ
Te khīṇa bījā avirūhicchandā;
Nibbanti dhīrā yathā yaṃ padīpo
Idam’pi Saṅghe ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu

These noble persons have eradicated all the clings, including craving. No new clings arise within them. They have no thought of being born again. These blemishless persons have destroyed the seeds of rebirth. They do not allow thoughts and desires to arise. They vanish like the flame of a lamp, into the eternal tranquillity of Nibbana. May this Truth about the Sangha confer blessings.

khīṇaṃ purāṇaṃ – the ability of past actions to bear fruit has eroded

navaṃ natthi sambhavaṃ – no new sins or merits accrue
No new defilements occur

viratta cittā – passionless mind

āyatike bhavasmiṃ – not attached to a future existence

khīṇa bījā – eradicated the seeds of rebirth

avirūhicchandā – no desire for growth – no desire to be born again

nibbanti dhīrā – the Great Ones – the arahants – disappear

yathā yaṃ padīpo – like the flame of the lamp that disappears

With this stanza the main Act of Truth in the Jewel Discourse, ends. The last three stanzas indicate the adoration of the Buddha by the assembled non-human beings.

14. **Yānīdha bhūtāni samā gatāni;
Bhummāni vā yāniva antaḷikkhe
Tathāgataṃ deva-manussapūjitaṃ;
Buddhaṃ namassāma suvatthi hotu**

Those beings assembled here, whether terrestrial or heaven-dwelling. The Buddha is worshipped by deities and humans. We worship the Buddha. May all beings be well.

idha - here

samā gatāni - assembled

bhummāni vā - terrestrial or

yāni bhūtāni - those beings

antaḷikkhe vā - heaven-dwelling or

deva-manussapūjitaṃ - worshipped by deities and human

Tathāgataṃ - the Buddha

Buddhaṃ - the Buddha

suvatthi hotu - may all beings be well

namassāma - worship

15. **Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni;
Bhummāni vā yāniva antaḷikkhe
Tathāgataṃ deva-manussa pūjitaṃ;
Dhammaṃ namassāma suvatthi hotu**

Those beings assembled here, whether terrestrial or heaven-dwelling. The Buddha is worshipped by deities and humans. We worship the Doctrine. May all beings be well.

Dhammaṃ - the Doctrine

15. Yānīdha bhūtāni samā gatāni;
Bhummāni vā yāniva antaḷikkhe
Tathāgataṃ deva-manussapūjitaṃ;
Saṅghaṃ namassāma suvatthi hotu

Those beings assembled here, whether terrestrial or heaven-dwelling. The Buddha is worshipped by deities and human. We worship the Sangha the Brotherhood. May all beings be well.

Saṅghaṃ - Sangha the Brotherhood

THE JEWEL DISCOURSE RATANA SUTTA

In the days of the Supremely Enlightened Buddha, the city of Vesali was the capital of the Vajji Kingdom of the Licchavis. This was among the 16 great Kingdoms that flourished at that time in India. The Kingdom of Vajji received extensive admiration at that time. It is believed that the world's first Republic existed in the Vajji Kingdom. The Licchavi Kings ruled their land not as all-powerful monarchs, but as leaders who upheld democratic ideals. The Supremely Enlightened Buddha spent His Fifth Rainy Season, after He attained Enlightenment, at the Domed Hall, in the city of Vesali. Several well-known Discourses including **Mahā Sihanaāda Sutta**, **Tevijja Sutta**, and **Mahāli Sutta** were delivered in the city of Vesali.

The city of Vesali, which had been a centre of prosperity and well-being over a long period of time, was overwhelmed by a totally unexpected disaster. This came in the wake of a prolonged drought. Trees withered and died. The farmlands and all vegetation swiftly turned into arid desert. When this calamity affected the city an epidemic spread around. Along with all this, the city was threatened by demons. This way, the three fears – the fear of drought, the fear of diseases and the fear from demons, overwhelmed the dwellers of the city of Vesali. The poor and the destitute died at first. The stench of discarded cadavers attracted the demons. The death-toll increased. The epidemic “Ahi Vataka” began to spread everywhere. Those who escaped death, assembled before the rulers and clamoured, saying that, this disaster, the like of which had never occurred before, came about due to an error in their rule. The rulers had the ministers and the army assembled, and asked the masses to speak publicly if there was any fault on the part of the rulers.

They did not have even a vestigial fault of the rulers to point to. After extensive deliberation they decided that the Buddha should be invited to visit the City. Seeing with His Supreme wisdom, that His visit to the affected city will benefit men, He accepted the invitation. The Enlightened One set out with a retinue of 500 monks. The Licchavi rulers had prepared a ship to enable the Buddha to cross the river and reach the city of Vesali.

Just as the Enlightened One entered the Vajji Kingdom, rain clouds gathered in the sky on all four directions. Heavy rains began to fall. The floods washed away the dead bodies and all the accumulated garbage and cleansed the city.

The withered trees began to green as if they had received a new life. It took three days to travel from the bank of the river to the city of Vesali. With the heavy rains, the drought ended. The Supreme Buddha summoned Venerable Ananda and taught him the Jewel Discourse. With that, he sent out Venerable Ananda to chant the Jewel Discourse throughout the city of Vesali.

Ven. Ananda, mastering the Jewel Discourse, traveled throughout the city of Vesali, accompanied by Licchavi Princes. He sprinkled water from the alms bowl of the Supreme Buddha, reciting stanzas of the Jewel Discourse. After completing the recital of the first two stanzas, Venerable Ananda started to recite the third stanza. Immediately he began the phrase “**Yamkinci Vittam**” some of the demons quickly made their escape through the city-gates. This way, the fear from the demons ended. After the completion of the recital of the stanza, that begins with the line “**Khīnaṃ purāṇaṃ navaṃ natthi sambhavaṃ**”, the **Ahivātaka** disease that afflicted the people vanished, as if wafted away by the wind.

The masses, over-joyed by this, constructed a decorated hall at the centre of the city, and had the Buddha and His retinue of 500 monks seated in it. The Supreme Buddha chanted the Jewel Discourse once again. At the end of the chanting 84,000 people realized the Dhamma. After that, the Discourse was chanted daily for six days. With that, the Buddha left for the city of Rajagaha, blessing the people of Vesali.

AFTER THE DECLARATION OF THE JEWEL DISCOURSE

Immediately the Buddha arrived in the city of Vesali, heavy rains fell. With the rains the drought ended. The atmosphere became cool. The total city of Vesali became clean, with all the dirt, garbage and rubbish washed off.

Although many non-human beings respected the Word of the Buddha, some stubborn demons did not respect His Words. But, immediately after they listened to the stanza, beginning “**Yaṃ kiñchi vittaṃ idhā vā huraṃ vā**”, those unruly demons could no longer stay there. The city gates were not wide enough for these evil demons to escape. Some ran away breaking walls and ramparts. Some obeyed the Buddha. When the evil demons fled, the threat from demons disappeared. When the main segment of the Discourse ended with the stanza that begins “**Khīnaṃ purāṇaṃ navaṃ natthi sambhavaṃ**”, the epidemic that devastated the city of Vesali, ended.

This way, the three forms of fear disappeared. Sakka, the chief of Gods, took leave, after the recital of the Jewel Discourse, worshipping the Buddha.

The Buddha preached the Jewel Discourse for seven consequent days. Eighty-four thousand beings realized the Dhamma.

When the Buddha left for the city of Rajagaha, informing the Licchavi rulers, the people of Vesali accompanied the Buddha in a procession, to the bank of the river.

At Rajagaha, the Buddha explained to the assembled bhikkhus, that He received all this adoration at Vesali because of the merit He had accrued in a past birth. At the request of the Bhikkhus, He narrated the past birth.

THE STORY OF SUSIMA THE PACCEKA BUDDHA (SILENT BUDDHA)

In the past, once, there lived in Taxila in India, an affluent Brahmin named Samkha. He had a son named Susima who was comely in appearance, wise, and had won the affection of all.

At the age of 16, he informed his father, that he wanted to go to Benares, for his studies. The father was very happy. He sent his son to Benares, and found him lodging in the house of a friend of his in Benares. The son was given thousand pieces of gold for his expenses. The father's friend gave him accommodation and taught him. Being a wise and great young person, within a few months, he completed his education. One day, the young man saw his teacher and said: "Sir, I can see the beginning and the middle of my studies. But, I cannot see the end. Could you please explain the end?" The teacher said that even he does not know the end of learning. When asked whether there was anyone who knew the end of learning, the teacher said, perhaps one of the Sages at Isipatana may know it. A Pacceka Buddha, he met at Isipatana said,

that if the young man would become a monk like him, he may discover the end of learning. Gladly, the young man became a monk.

After diligently practising Dhamma, Susima the young man became a Pacceka Buddha in a few months. Although Susima became famous as a Pacceka Buddha in Benares, he was short-lived. His demise occurred, shortly after he became a Pacceka Buddha. The people of the city constructed a stupa, enshrining the ashes of the Pacceka Buddha. His father traveled about looking for his son. Learning that his son had passed away as a Pacceka Buddha, the father worshipped the stupa, built a parasol at the top of the stupa, and went back to Taxila.

The Buddha said that he was Brahmin Samkha at that time. Because of his respect and veneration for the stupa of Susima the Pacceka Buddha, today, as the Buddha, He receives the respect, veneration and adoration of the people.

The Buddha declared that, if one donated even a simple thing with a pure mind, that will earn great merit. He uttered this stanza:

Mattā sukha pariccā gā
Passe ve vipulaṃ sukhaṃ
Caje matta sukhaṃ dhīro
Sampassaṃ vipulaṃ sukhaṃ

If you sacrifice even a minute quantum of your happiness, that great person acquires much happiness in the future.

May all beings be happy.

**DISCOURSE ON
LOVING-KINDNESS
METTA SUTTA**

DISCOURSE ON LOVING-KINDNESS METTA SUTTA

1. **Karaṇīya mattha kusalena;
Yaṃ taṃ santaṃ padaṃ abhi-samecca
Sakko ujū ca sūjū ca;
Suvaco ca'ssa mudu anati-mānī**

He who is skilled in his good and
Who wishes to attain that state of calm should act thus
He should be able, upright, perfectly upright,
Obedient, gentle and humble.

2. **Santussako ca subharo ca;
Appa kicco ca sallahukavutti
Santindriyo ca nipako ca;
Appagabbho kulesu ananugiddho**

Contented, easily supportable,
With few duties, of light livelihood,
Controlled in senses, discreet, not impudent,
Not be greedily attached to families.

3. **Na ca khuddhaṃ samācare kiñci;
Yena viññū pare upavadeyyuṃ
Sukhino vā khemino hontu;
Sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā**

He should not commit any slight wrong
such that other wise men might censure him.
May all beings be happy and secure;
May their hearts be wholesome!

4. **Ye keci pāṇa bhūt'atthī;
Tasā va thāvarā vā anavasesā
Dīghā vā ye mahantā vā;
Majjhimā rassa kāṇuka thūlā**

Whatsoever living beings there be;
feeble or strong, long, stout or medium,
short, small or large,
seen or unseen.

5. **Diṭṭhā vā yeva addiṭṭhā;
Ye ca dūre vasanti avidūre
Bhūtā vā sambhavesī vā;
Sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhittā**

Those dwelling far or near,
those who are born and those who are to be born –
May all beings, without exception,
be happy minded!

6. **Na paro paraṃ nikubbetha;
Nāti maññetha katthaci naṃ kanci
Byārosanā paṭigha saññā;
Naññamaññassa dukkha-miccheyya**

Let not one deceive another
nor despise any person whatsoever in any place.
In anger or ill-will, let him not wish any harm to another.

7. **Mātā yathā niyaṃ puttāṃ;
Āyusā eka putta manurakkhe
Evam'pi sabba bhūtesu;
Mānasā bhāvaye अपरि māṇaṃ**

Just as a mother would protect her only child,
At the risk of her own life, even so let him cultivate
a boundless heart towards all beings.

8. **Mettaṃ ca sabbalokasmiṃ;
Mānasam bhāvaye aparimāṇam
Uddham adho ca tiriyaṇ ca;
Asambādham averam asapattam**

Let thoughts of boundless love pervade the whole world
above, below and across without any obstruction,
without any hatred, without any enmity.

9. **Titṭham caram nisinno vā;
Sayāno vā yāvata'ssa vigatamiddho
Etaṃ satim adhiṭṭheyya;
Brahma metaṃ vihāram idhamāhu**

Whether he stands, walks, sits or lies down,
as long as he is awake
he should develop this mindfulness.
This, they say, is the Highest Conduct here.

10. **Diṭṭhim ca anupagamma sīlavā;
Dassanena sampanno
Kāmesu vineyya gedham;
Na hi jātu gabbha-seyyam punaretī'ti**

Not falling into error,
virtuous, and endowed with insight,
he discards attachment to sensuous desires.
Of a truth, he does not come again for conception in a
womb.

THE MEANING OF THE SUTTA

This **Sutta** describes the systematic development of the **Mettā Bhāvanā** and from the beginning to the end of this **Sutta** there is the system of developing the **Mettā** meditation. Therefore if we analyse this **Sutta** by studying its various sections we can understand it clearly and easily. According to the system taught by the **Sutta** there are six considerations to be fulfilled in the **Mettā Bhāvanā**.

These six considerations are described as follows :

- i. The mental qualities which the **yogāvacara** who intends to practise **Mettā Bhāvanā** should cultivate.
- ii. Brief description of the Meditation.
- iii. Description of living beings.
- iv. Other methods of expressing thoughts full of loving-kindness.
- v. The method of developing the **Mettā Bhāvanā**.
- vi. The beneficial results of this **Mettā Bhāvanā**.

I. The mental qualities which the yogāvacara who intends to practise Mettā Bhāvanā should cultivate.

Karaṇīya mattha kusalena;
Yaṃ taṃ santaṃ padaṃ abhi-samecca
Sakko ujū ca sūjū ca;
Suvaco ca'ssa mudu anati mānī
Santussako ca subhara ca;
Appa kicco ca sallahukavutti
Santindriyo ca nipako ca;
Appagabbho kulesu ananugiddho
Na ca khuddhaṃ samācare kiñci;
Yena viññū pare upavadeyyuṃ

MEANING

The aspirant who wishes to attain the peace of Nibbana should do these things which he ought to do. He must act in such a way that he has comprehended, those things which he ought to do, and those things which he ought not to do. He should be efficient and honest. He should be gentle and humble and should be contented with what he receives. He should be healthy and well nourished. He should be a person of leisure with little work. He should have a light and happy disposition. He should be well disciplined and self-controlled and calm with his senses under restraint. He should be wise and clever and not be over attached to people of good birth. He should follow the advice of other wise persons and should not even commit a small error.

DESCRIPTION

Here the sixteen qualities which a **yogāvacara** intent on **Mettā Bhāvana** should cultivate are described. Of these he should observe 15 qualities and not observe one.

1. **Attakusalena** – The Bhikkhu who has renounced the world and is observing the pure precepts – if he wishes to attain Nibbana he should observe **Adhisīla, Adhicitta, Adhipaññā** (Training in Higher Morality – Training in Higher Mentality, and in Higher Wisdom.)

2. **Sakko** – Not being reluctant or indolent to cultivate and be proficient, in the qualities – **Kasina, parikamma chittasamadhana**, and others.

3. **Uju** – To be straight forward – not to be crooked in body word and mind.

4. **Suju** – To be straight forward till the end of one's life in mind, body and word (to be mentally straight forward).

5. **Suvaco** – This means that he should be a docile person who accepts the active advice of teachers and other wise men and follows them.

6. **Mudu** – This denotes that both in appearance and behaviour he should cultivate mild and kind qualities.

7. **Anatimāni** – To be humble and not to look down upon others and treat everybody alike, ignoring considerations of high birth or high positions.

8. **Santussako** – However bitter or unpalatable or however sweet and delectable the alms and other requisites he receives he should be contented with them and have a mind of equanimity towards the things he has received.

9. **Subharo** – He could be nourished easily. He should accept with equal pleasure delicious food as well as food which is not so tasty.

10. **Appakicco** – He should not be a person who has too much work to do like new industries in the **vihāra** shrine. This signifies that he should be a person who has the minimum amount of work and much leisure for, otherwise he could not have sufficient time to devote to his meditation.

11. **Sallahukavutti** – He must be a person who does not have too much possessions but the minimum of belongings. Too many possessions are an obstruction to meditation and his

mind and attention will be very often distracted and diverted towards the safeguarding and protection of this property.

12. **Santindriyo** – He should have his senses properly controlled and disciplined and be calmed.

13. **Nipako** – In observing the precepts he should have a good disposition and possess good knowledge, wisdom and insight.

14. **Appagabbho** – All his actions performed by his mind, body and words should not be undisciplined and should be undertaken with restraint and care and without haste.

15. **Kulesu ananugiddho** – In order to obtain the four types of requisites (robes, residence, food and medicine) he should not cultivate unnecessarily close association with the households of laymen. Hitherto we have described things which he ought to do. There is one action which he should avoid.

16. **Na ca khuddam samācare** – He should act in such a way that he will not commit even a small error which could invite the criticism and censure of wise people. He should refrain from all types of wrong acts and deeds.

All these attributes and qualities should be possessed by the **yogāvacara** intent on **Mettā Bhāvanā**. It is evident that this **Sutta** describes briefly and very clearly all the qualities and attributes which the **yogāvacara** should possess to develop **Mettā** or loving-kindness. This is the special importance of this **Sutta**.

II. The Meditation in Brief

**Sukhino vā khemino hontu;
Sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhi-tattā**

MEANING

May all beings be happy, be free from fear, and live with peaceful and contented minds.

DESCRIPTION

The **yogāvacara** who has acquired the qualities mentioned earlier should, in order to develop the **Mettā Bhāvanā**, first of all repeat this stanza. Here, '**Sukhino**', signifies bodily happiness '**sukhitatta**' signifies mental happiness. Therefore, the meaning in brief of this stanza is that "all beings should be happy, both in body and in mind, and be without fear".

III. Description of living beings.

**Ye keci pāṇa-bhūt'atthī;
Tasā va thāvarā vā anavasesā
Dīghā vā ye mahantā vā;
Majjhimā rassa-kāṇuka-thūlā
Ditṭhā vā yeva additṭhā;
Ye ca dūre vasanti avidūre
Bhūtā vā sambhavesī vā;
Sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā**

MEANING

All beings who are subject to fear or not subject to fear –

they, as well as those who are long or short or medium sized or small or fat – all living beings, if they exist, they, too, as well as those beings who are visible or invisible, or those beings who live far away or nearby – they too, as well as, spirits and disembodied beings – May all these beings have happy and contented minds.

DESCRIPTION

All beings mentioned in the second part are described separately in this way.

Here all living beings can be divided into 3 categories. –
Thasa, Thāvara and Avasesa

- i. **Thasa** – means beings who are subject to fear and full of defilements
- ii. **Thāvara** – means Arahants who are not subject to fear
- iii. **Avasesa** – The beings who exist and who do not fall into these two categories mentioned, that is **thasa** and **thāvara**

Again the beings have been divided into 3 more categories – long, fat and medium sized.

- i. **Dīgha** – Beings with long bodies like reptiles and fishes
- ii. **Mahanta** – beings like elephants, **nagas** and **asuras** who have fat bodies
- iii. **Majjhima** – Beings like horses, cattle and human beings who have medium sized bodies

Once again these beings can be divided into 3 more categories – **Rassaka, anuka** and **thūla**.

- i. **Rassaka** – beings with dwarfed or small bodies

- ii. **Anuka** – beings who live on both land and water and are invisible to the human eye
- iii. **Thūla** – beings like tortoises and turtles who have rounded bodies

Once again we can divide all living beings into another two categories – **diṭṭha** and **adiṭṭha**.

- i. **Diṭṭha** – beings who are visible to one's eye
- ii. **Adiṭṭha** – beings who are invisible to the eye and live in external worlds

Again we can categorize these living being into two classes – those who live far away and those who live nearby.

- i. **Dūra** – beings who live far away–beings who live far away from the place we exist
- ii. **Avidūra** – beings who live nearby–those who live close to the place we exist

Once again we can categorize these living beings into 2 classes – **Bhūta** and **Sambhavesi**.

- i. **Bhūta** – as they do not have another rebirth they are Arahants
- ii. **Sambhavesi** – Beings who have not eradicated or overcome their defilements, and expect to be born again

We can also describe the same beings in a different way – before **andaja**, **jalābuja** beings come out from their cocoons they are **sambhavesi** beings. After they come out of their cocoons they are **bhūta** beings.

By another classification **Sansedaja opapātika** beings in their first **cittaksana** are **Sambhavesi**. In their second **cittaksana** they are **bhūta** beings. If he is born in a particular posture till he

does not undergo any change he is **Sambhavesi**. When that posture changes he becomes a **bhūta** being.

Thus the **Mettā Bhāvanā** should be extended towards all living beings, with the wish **Sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhittā**—“May all beings be happy and have contented minds.”

IV. Other methods of expressing thoughts full of loving-kindness (Mettā)

Na paro paraṃ nikubbetha;
Nāti maññetha katthaci naṃ kanci
Byāro-saṇā paṭighasaññā;
Nāññamaññassa dukkha-miccheyya

MEANING

Let not any one deceive any one else, or look down upon anyone on any occasion. Let not anyone inflict any sorrow on anybody by any action, or by words with an evil mind.

DESCRIPTION

This is another way of expressing the wish – “May all beings have a sense of well-being and be happy and healthy.” A person is happy and contented only if nobody else denies him, or if he is not humiliated, or if no harm is done against him either with the body, mind or words.

V. Method of developing the Mettā Bhāvanā

Mātā yathā niyaṃ puttāṃ;
Āyusā eka putta manurakkhe

Evam'pi sabba bhūtesu;
Mānasam bhāvaye aparimāṇam
Mettaṃ ca sabba lokasmiṃ;
Mānasam bhāvaye aparimāṇam

Uddham adho ca tiriyaṃ ca;
Asambādham averaṃ asapattam
Tiṭṭham caraṃ nisinno vā;
Sayāno vā yāvat'assa vigatamiddho
Etaṃ satim adhiṭṭheyya;
Brahma metaṃ vihāraṃ idhamāhu

MEANING

Just as a mother loves and protects her only son with devotion and self-sacrifice, similarly, we must bestow a limitless loving-kindness towards all living beings. We should develop this loving-kindness and extend it in all directions – above, below and all around without any obstructions or hindrances without considering any limitations of friend or foe, without any hate or envy. We must bestow this loving-kindness as though we have no enemy in this world. When we are sitting, walking, standing or sleeping, in all these postures, without any sloth or indolence, we should bring this feeling of loving-kindness always to our minds. This developed form of living is called the “**Brahma Vihāra.**”

“Na hi jātu gabbha seyyam punareti”

The person who meditates and attains **Anāgami**, and dies in this human world, is reborn again in the world of Brahma, and then he reaches Arahant hood and attains **Parinibbāna**. He will not be born again in the womb of a mother. This shows that as a

result of the beneficial influence of **Mettā Bhāvanā** one can attain even Arahant hood. This also makes it clear that the individual who develops **Mettā Bhāvanā** to its utmost perfection can, by stages, attain to the fivefold path of **Sotāpatti**, **Sakadāgami**, **Anāgami** and **Arahant**.

DESCRIPTION

This section describes by what method we can develop a mind full of loving-kindness. A mother who has only one son will look after and protect her son like her own life. Sometimes, even without considering the safety and security of her own life, she would protect her only son. In her mind there is a strong feeling of loving-kindness towards her only son. Therefore, the person who is developing loving-kindness **Mettā Bhāvanā** should likewise have a mind full of loving-kindness spread out towards all living beings in this whole world. It should be loving-kindness which is extended to all the innumerable and countless living beings in this world with the same intensity. When he develops this mind in this way there should be no obstructions or hindrances to this development. No conception or idea of an enemy, or foe, should enter his mind. He should not have any opponents or adversaries. In all the postures in which he is – sitting, standing, walking, sleeping, without any sloth or indolence he should develop this feeling of loving-kindness towards all living beings.

VI. The beneficial results of **Mettā Bhavana**

Diṭṭhiṃ ca anupagamma sīlavā;

Dassanena sampanno

Kāmesu vineyya gedhaṃ;

Na hi jātu gabbha-seyyaṃ punareti

MEANING

The individual who is performing the **Mettā Bhāvanā** should observe the precepts, eradicate and overcome all wrong beliefs and have a clear vision of Nibbana. He should completely exclude from his mind all attachments to desire and craving. He will not have any rebirth in the womb of a mother.

DESCRIPTION

This describes the beneficent results obtained by the **Mettā Bhāvanā**. “**Diṭṭhiṃ ca anupagamma sīlavā dassanena sampanno**”. This reveals that the **yogāvacara** who performs the **Mettā Bhāvanā** observing all the precepts, thereby overcomes and eradicates all incorrect and superstitious beliefs, and is able to envision the state of Nibbana. Therefore, the meaning of the two lines of this stanza signifies that the **yogāvacara**, as a result of cultivating the beneficent influences of **Mettā Bhāvanā**, attains the path of **Sotāpatti**. “**Kāmesu vineyya gedham**”. The reduction of desire and attachment takes place when he attains the Path **Sakadāgami**, and its eradication takes place in the Path of **Anāgami**. This means that the **yogāvacara**, with the help of **Mettā Bhāvanā**, eradicates within himself all traces of craving and desire, and attains the state of **Sakadāgami** and **Anāgami**.

HOW TO PRACTISE METTā

It is imperative to choose a quiet place for the practice of any type of meditation. You can prepare such a place in your own home. A shrine room in your own home where all the members of the family could get together and make offerings and observe the five precepts, would be an ideal place for practising such meditation.

Before the commencement of meditation one should clean oneself and whorship the Triple Gem with offerings of flowers and seek refuge in the Triple Gem and observe the five precepts. Thereafter one should be seated in an appropriate posture. It is better for men to be seated cross legged (**baddha paryanka**) and for women to be seated with their legs bent backwards (**ardhaparyanka**). However, there is no harm in adopting a posture convenient to oneself which does not hinder the progress of meditation. One should keep one's body erect, placing the right hand on the left, close one's eyes and commence the meditation with the following thoughts :—

“May I be happy, healthy and well, Like me, may all beings of the world be happy, healthy and well.”

Thinking thus again and again, **Mettā Bhavana** should be practised. This is the first stage. Once it is well practised one should go on to the second stage which is as follows –

“May I be happy, healthy and well, may my parents be happy, healthy and well;

May my teachers also be happy, healthy and well;

May my brothers and sisters also be happy, healthy and well;

May my relatives also be happy, healthy and well;

May my friends also be happy, healthy and well;

May my neighbours be happy, healthy and well;

May my enemies be happy, healthy and well;

May those who are evenly disposed towards me be happy healthy and well;

May all beings of the world be happy, healthy and well.”

In this manner this meditation should be practised always during a specific period. When you continue to practise this, there arises in your mind loving-kindness towards all beings. As a result, you will get the power to practise this thought of loving-kindness throughout the day and in every posture.

Once you get used to this meditation you will not have in this world two groups as friends and enemies. All beings of the world, including the animals, will become your friends. Then you will be able to live happily, and you are certain to gain tranquillity of the mind. Your words will be sweet and your manners will be calm.

VANDANĀ

SALUTATION TO THE BUDDHA VANDANĀ

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā-Sambuddhassa

Honour to Him, the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Fully
Enlightened One.

Namo – (I) adore, salute, pay homage

Tassa – to (him)

Bhagavato – the Blessed One

Arahato – the Accomplished (Worthy) One

Sammā – fully

Sambuddhassa – Enlightened One

TAKING THE THREE REFUGES TI-SARAṆA

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

I go to the Buddha as my refuge.

I go to the Dhamma as my refuge.

I go to the Sangha as my refuge.

Dutiyam'pi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dutiyam'pi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dutiyam'pi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

For the second time I go to the Buddha as my refuge.

For the second time I go to the Dhamma as my refuge.

For the second time I go to the Sangha as my refuge.

Tatīyam'pi Buddhamaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Tatīyam'pi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Tatīyam'pi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

For the third time I go to the Buddha as my refuge.
For the third time I go to the Dhamma as my refuge.
For the third time I go to the Sangha as my refuge.

Buddham – Enlightened one
saraṇaṃ – refuge
gacchāmi – go

Dutīyam'pi – for the second time
Tatīyam'pi – for the third time

THE FIVE PRECEPTS PAÑCA SILA

1. **Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhā padaṃ samādiyāmi**
I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from
destroying the life of beings.
2. **Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhā padaṃ samādiyāmi**
I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from
taking things not given.
3. **Kāmesu micchā-cārā veramaṇī sikkhā padaṃ
samādiyāmi**
I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from
sexual misconduct.
4. **Musāvādā veramaṇī sikkhā padaṃ samādiyāmi**
I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from false
speech.

**5. Surā meraya-majja pamā-datṭhānā veramaṇī
sikkhā padaṃ samādiyāmi**

I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from
intoxicating drinks and drugs which cause heedlessness.

pāṇātipātā - pāṇa – life; **(a) tipātā** - destroying
veramaṇī – abstain

sikkhā padaṃ – precept

samādiyāmi – observe

adinna + ādānā – taking what is not given

kāmesu – sensual pleasure

micchā + ācāra – misconduct, going in the wrong way

musāvadā – telling lies

surā – fermentations

meraya – tree fluids intoxication

majja – intoxicants

pamāda – ṭhāna – causing heedlessness

**VERSES FOR PAYING HOMAGE TO THE TRIPLE GEM
TIRATANA VANDANĀ**

SALUTATION TO THE BUDDHA

**Iti'pi so Bhagavā, Arahaṃ, Sammā-Sambuddho, Vijjā
caraṇa sampanno, Sugato, Lokavidū, Anuttaro purisa
damma sārathī, Satthā devamanussānaṃ, Buddho,
Bhagavā'ti.**

Such indeed is the Blessed One, Exalted, Perfectly Enlightened
One, endowed with knowledge and virtue. Well-gone, Knower
of the worlds. A Guide incomparable for the training of
individuals. Teacher of gods and men, Enlightened and Holy.

Iti-pi– in this manner

so – He (the Enlightened One)

Bhagava – the Blessed One (1)

Araham – Exalted - worthy of honour (2)

Sammā Sambuddho – Supremely Enlightened (3)

vijjā caraṇa – in knowledge and conduct (4)

vijjā – knowledge **caraṇa** – conduct

sampanno – accomplished

Sugato – well-formed (of body) ; well-arrived (5)

Lokavidū – knower of worlds (6)

Anuttaro purisa damma sārathī – incomparable trainer of men (7)

Anuttaro – incomparable, **purisa** – man, **damma** – tame
sārathī – charioteer

Satthā devamanussānaṃ - Teacher of gods and men (8)

deva – deity, **manussānaṃ** – of men

Buddho - Enlightened One (9)

SALUTATION TO THE DHAMMA

**Svākkhāto Bhagavatā, Dhammo, Sandiṭṭhiko,
Akāliko, Ehi-passiko, Opanayiko, Paccattaṃ veditabbo
viññūhi'ti.**

Well-expounded is the Dhamma by the Blessed One, to be self-realised, with immediate fruit; inviting all to 'come and see', worthy to be achieved; to be attained by the wise, each for himself.

svākkhāto – well-proclaimed

Bhagavatā – blessed one

Dhammo – doctrine, law

sandiṭṭhiko – can be seen here itself
akāliko – in no time (immediately)
ehi-passiko – come and see
opanayiko – leading onwards
paccattam – (by) self – individually
veditabbo – must be understood
viññūhi-iti – by the wise

SALUTATION TO THE SANGHA

Supaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvaka saṅgho, ujupaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvaka saṅgho, Nāyapaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvaka saṅgho, Sāmīcipaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvaka saṅgho, yadidaṃ cattāri, purisa yugāni, aṭṭha purisa puggalā, esa Bhagavato sāvaka saṅgho, āhuneyyo, pāhuneyyo, dakkhiṇeyyo, añjali karaṇīyo anuttaram puññakkhettaṃ lokassā'ti.

Of good conduct is the Order of the Blessed One's disciples. Of upright conduct is the Order of the Blessed One's disciples. Of wise conduct is the Order of the Blessed One's disciples. Of dutiful conduct is the Order of the Blessed One's disciples. These four pairs of men, the eight individuals. This is the Order of the Blessed One's disciples, is worthy of offerings, is worthy of hospitality, is worthy of gifts, is worthy of salutation, is an incomparable field of merits to the world.

Supaṭi panno – good conduct
Bhagavato – (of the) blessed one
sāvaka – disciple
saṅgho — the community (monks)
ujupaṭi panno – of right conduct

ñāyapaṭi panno – of wise conduct

sāmīcipaṭi panno – of correct conduct

yadidaṃ – these

cattāri – four

purisa – men

yugāni – pairs

aṭṭha – eight

purisa puggalā – individual men

esa – these

āhuneyyo – worthy of offering

pāhuneyyo – worthy of hospitality

dakkhiṇeyyo – worthy of gifts

añjali – fingers

karaṇīyo – doing (saluted with clasped hands)

anuttaram – incomparable

puñña – merit

khettaṃ – field

lokassa iti – for the world

SUMMARY OF THE FOUR PROTECTIVE MEDITATION

Namāmi Buddhāṃ gunasāgaramtaṃ.

Sattā sadā hontu sukhī averā

Kāyo jiguccho sakalo dugandho

Gacchanti sabbe maraṇaṃ ahaṃ ca

I salute the Buddha, an ocean of virtue.

May all beings be happy and free from enmity.

The body is repulsive and full of foul smell.

All beings, including myself, will one day die.

namāmi – (I) salute

Buddhāṃ – The Blessed One

guna – virtue

sāgaram – ocean

taṃ – him

sattā – living beings

sadā – always

hontu – may be

sukhī – happy

averā – free from enmity

kāyo – body

jiguccho – repulsive

sakalo – all

dugandho – foul smell

gacchanti – go

sabbe – all

maraṇaṃ – death

ahaṃ ca – I too

Namāmi Dhammaṃ sugatena desitaṃ.

Sattā sadā hontu sukhī averā

Kāyo jiguccho sakalo dugandho

Gacchanti sabbe maraṇaṃ ahaṃ ca

I salute the Dhamma recited by the Buddha.

May all beings be happy and free from enmity.

The body is repulsive and full of foul smell.

All beings, including myself, will one day die.

Dhammaṃ – Doctrine

sugatena – by the Buddha

desitaṃ – recited; espounded

Namāmi Sanghaṃ Munirājasāwakaṃ.

Sattā sadā hontu sukhī averā

Kāyo jiguccho sakalo dugandho

Gacchanti sabbe maraṇaṃ ahaṃ ca

I salute the Sangha, the Buddha's disciples.

May all beings be happy and free from enmity.

The body is repulsive and full of foul smell.

All beings, including myself, will one day die.

Sanghaṃ - community of monks

Munirājasāwakaṃ. – The Buddha's disciples.

OFFERINGS

PŪJĀ

OFFERING OF LIGHT

**Ghana sārappa dittena,
Dīpena tama dhansinā;
Tiloka dīpaṃ sambuddhaṃ,
Pūjayāmi tamonudaṃ.**

I offer Him, the Exalted One, the Incomparable Light of three Worlds, the Light that dispels the darkness of Ignorance, with this light, I now light.

ghanasāra – camphor
(pa) dittena – well lighted
dīpena – lights, lamps
tama – darkness
dhansinā – destroys
tiloka – ti-loka – 3 worlds
dīpaṃ – light, lamp
sambuddhaṃ – fully Enlightened One
pūjayāmi – I offer
tamo – ignorance (in this instance)
nudaṃ – dispersing, dispelling

OFFERING OF PERFUMED SMOKE

**Gandha sambhāra yuttana,
Dhūpenāhaṃ sugandhinā;
Pūjaye pūjanīyaṃ taṃ,
Pujā bhājana muttamaṃ.**

I offer Him, the Exalted One, the Worthy and Deserved of offering, with this smoke of Fragrance.

Gandha – smell fragrance

sambhāra – object, material

yuttena – having

dhūpenāhaṃ – dhupena + ahaṃ – smoke + “I”

sugandhinā – good smell

pūjaye – (“I”) offer

pūjanīyaṃ – worthy of offering

taṃ – him, that

pujā – offering

bhājana m – that should be offered

uttamaṃ – noble, virtuous, highest, great

OFFERING OF FLOWERS

Pūjemi Buddhaṃ kusumena nena,

Puññaena me tena ca hotu mokkhaṃ,

Pupphaṃ milāyāti yathā idaṃ me,

Kāyo tathā yāti vināsa bhāvaṃ.

I offer Him the Exalted One, the Lord Buddha with these flowers. May this virtue be helpful for my Final Freedom. Our body undergoes decay as quickly as does these flowers fade away.

pūjemi – (“I”) offer

Buddhaṃ - Enlightened One

kusumena – (with) the flowers

a nena – these

puññaena – (by this) merit

etena – this

me – I

ca – too

hotu – be

mokkhaṃ – deliverance

pupphaṃ – flower

milāyāti – fade

yathā – in the same way

idaṃ – this

me – my

kāyo – body

tathā – like that

yāti – goes

vināsa bhāvaṃ – state of destruction (death)

OFFERING OF WATER

Adhivāsetu no Bhante,

Pāniyaṃ parikappitaṃ;

Anukampaṃ upādāya,

Patiganhātu muttamaṃ.

O, Venerable Sir, the Exalted One, please accept this water (strained and arranged by us for the purpose of this offering) as an offering to thee, out of Great Compassion on us.

bhante – venerable sir

no – our

parikappitaṃ – prepared (straining or boiling)

pāniyaṃ – water for drinking

adhivāsetu – please accept

uttamaṃ – pure

anukampaṃ – pity, mercy

upādāya – having

patiganhātu – please accept

OFFERING OF FOOD

**Adhivāsetu no Bhante,
Bhojanam parikappitaṃ;
Anukampaṃ upādāya,
Patiganhātu muttamaṃ.**

O, Venerable Sir, may this Food (provided and arranged by us in the rightful way) be kindly accepted by Thee out of Great Compassion on us.

parikappitaṃ – prepared (straining or boiling)
Bhojanam – food

OFFERING OF MEDICINAL DRINKS

**Adhivāsetu no Bhante,
Gilāna paccayaṃ imaṃ;
Anukampaṃ upādāya,
Patiganhātu muttamaṃ.**

O Venerable Sir, may this medicinal drink (provided and arranged by us in the rightful way) be kindly accepted by Thee, out of Great Compassion on us.

Gilāna paccayaṃ – medicinal drink

VENERATION
TRANSFERENCE OF
MERITS

ASPIRATION

FORGIVENESS

SALUTATION TO THE THREE
MAIN OBJECTS OF VENERATION

**Vandāmi cetiyaṃ sabbam,
Sabba ṭhānesu paṭiṭṭhitam;
Sārīrika dhātu Mahā Bodhiṃ,
Buddha rūpaṃ sakalam sadā.**

I salute every Chetiya (shrine), that may stand in any place the
Bodily Relics, the Great Bodhi Tree, and all images of the
Buddha.

vandāmi – “I” salute
cetiyaṃ – pagoda - stupa
sabbam – all
sabba – all
ṭhānesu – places everywhere
paṭiṭṭhitam – built, established
sārīrika a – bodily
dhātu – relics
mahā – great
bodhiṃ – Bodhi-Tree
rūpaṃ – image
sakalam – all
sadā – everyday, always

TO MAKE DEVAS PARTICIPATE IN MERITS

Ettāvatā ca amhehi
Sambhatam puñña sampadam
Sabbe Devā anumodantu
Sabba sampatti siddhiyā

May all beings share this merit, which we have thus acquired.
May it contribute greatly to their happiness.

amhehi – by us
ettāvatā ca – so far (until today)
sambhatam – acquired
puñña sampadam – fortune of merit
sabbe devā – all deities
anumodantu – may share, may partake
sabba sampatti – all kinds of happiness
siddhiyā – for the accomplishment

TRANSFERENCE OF MERITS TO THE DEPARTED

Idam me ñātinam hotu
Sukhitā hontu ñātayo

Let this merit accrue to our relatives, and may they be happy.

Idam – this merit
me – to my
ñātinam – relatives
hotu – may accrue
sukhitā – in happiness
hontu – may (you) be
ñātayo – relatives

ASPIRATION OR WISH

Iminā puñña kammaena
Mā me bāla samāgamo,
Sataṃ samāgamo hotu,
Yāva nibbāna pattiya.

By the grace of this merit that I have acquired may I never meet the foolish, but only the wise, up to the time I attain the Final Happiness.

Iminā – by this
puñña – meritorious
kammaena – action
mā – do not let
me – me
bāla – fools
samāgamo – association
sataṃ – with the wise
hotu – be
yāva – till, up to the time
nibbāna – deliverance
pattiya – attain

FORGIVENESS OF SHORTCOMINGS

**Kāyena vācā cittaena,
Pamādena mayā kataṃ;
Accayaṃ khama me bhante,
Bhūri pañña Tathāgata.**

O, Venerable Sir, Greatly Wise, may I be excused for any shortcomings on my part that may have been uncautiously committed by me through body, speech and thought.

kāyena – (by) body
vācā – (by) speech
cittaena – (by) mind
pamādena – heedlessness,
mayā – (by) me
kataṃ – done
accayaṃ – mistake
khama – pardon
me – me
bhante – venerable sir
bhūri – great
pañña – wisdom
Tathāgata – Buddha

DEVOTIONAL VERSES

STANZAS OF VICTORY
JAYA MAṄGALA GĀTHĀ

VERSES FOR TAKING
REFUGE
IN THE TRIPLE GEM

NINE GREAT VIRTUES OF
THE BUDDHA
NAVA GUNA GĀTHĀ

STANZAS OF VICTORY JAYA MAṄGALA GĀTHĀ

1. **Bāhuṃ sahaṣṣamabhinimmita sāyudhantaṃ**
Giri mekhalam udita ghora sasena māraṃ
Dānādi dhamma vidhinā jitavā Munindo
Taṃ tejasā bhavatu te jaya maṅgalāni

Creating thousand hands, with weapons armed, was Mara seated on the trumpeting, ferocious elephant Girimekhala. Him, together with his army, did the Buddha subdue by means of generosity and other virtues, by the grace of which may joyous victory be yours.

bāhuṃ – hands

sahaṣṣam – thousand

abhinimmita – having created

sa-āyudhan – with weapons

taṃ – that

Giri mekhalam – name of the elephant

udita – having got on / mounted

ghora – ferocious

sasena – with retinue

māraṃ – evil one

dānādi – generosity, etc.

dhamma – (perfections) virtue

vidhinā – by this way

jitavā – won

Munindo – sage

taṃ – (by) that

tejasā – power

bhavatu – may **jaya maṅgalāni** – victorious, joyous

te – (to) you

2. **Mārātireka mabhiyujjhita sabba rattiṃ**
Ghoraṃ panālavaka makkha mathaddha yakkhaṃ
Khantī sudanta vidhinā jitavā Munindo
Taṃ tejasā bhavatu te jaya maṅgalāni

More violent than Mara was the indocile, obstinate demon Alavaka, who battled with the Buddha throughout one whole night. Him, did the Buddha subdue by means of His patience and self-control, by the grace of which may joyous victory be yours.

Māra – evil one

a tirekaṃ – an extra (the very)

abhiyujjhita – having fought

sabba rattiṃ – whole night

ghoraṃ – ferocious

ālavakaṃ – name of the Demon

akkhama – cannot be subdued / controlled

thaddha – hard / difficult

yakkhaṃ – genie, demon

khantī – patience

sudanta – well-trained

3. **Nālāgiriṃ gaja varaṃ atimatta bhūtaṃ**
Dāvaggi cakka masanīva sudāruṇantaṃ
Mettaṃbuseka vidhinā jitavā Munindo
Taṃ tejasā bhavatu te jaya maṅgalāni

Nalagiri, the king-elephant, highly intoxicated, was raging like a forest fire and was terrible as a thunder-bolt. Sprinkling the waters of loving-kindness, this ferocious beast, did the Buddha subdue, by the grace of which may joyous victory be yours.

(**gajavaram**) – (great elephant) **gaja** – elephant; **varam** – great
 (**atimatta**) – **ati** – very; **matta** – intoxicated (very intoxicated)
bhūtaṃ – (having) been
dāvaggi – the forest fire or terrifying
cakkaṃ – wheel
asanī +iva - like thunderbolt
sudāruṇaṃ /taṃ – very fearful/he
metta – loving-kindness
ambu – water
seka – pouring onto; sprinkling

4. **Ukkhitta khagga mati hattha sudāruṇantaṃ**
Dhāvanti-yojana pathaṅgulimāla vantaṃ
Iddhībhi saṅkhata mano jītvā Munindo
Taṃ tejasā bhavatu te jaya maṅgalāni

With uplifted sword, for a distance of three leagues, did wicked
Aṅgulimāla run. Him, did the Buddha subdue by His psychic
 powers. By the grace of which may joyous victory be yours.

ukkhitta – raised; upraised
khaggaṃ – sword
ati – very;
hatthaṃ – hand
sudāruṇaṃ – wicked in the extreme
taṃ – he
dhāvaṃ – running
tiyojana -ti-yojana – 3 yojanas (1 yojana = 12 miles)
pathaṃ – road, path
Aṅgulimāla – name of the wicked robber
vantaṃ – (he) having
iddhi – superhuman power
abhisankata – creating
mano – mental

5. **Katvāna katṭha mudaraṃiva gabbhinīyā**
Ciñcāya duṭṭha vacanaṃ janakāya majjhe
Santena soma vidhinā jitavā Munindo
Taṃ tejasā bhavatu te jaya maṅgalāni

Her belly bound with faggots, to simulate the bigness of pregnancy, Cinca, with harsh words, made foul accusation in the midst of an assemblage. Her, did the Buddha subdue by His serene and peaceful bearing. By the grace of which may joyous victory be yours.

katvāna – having done

katṭhaṃ – faggots

udaraṃ – belly (stomach)

gabbhi-nīyā – of pregnant (women)

iva – like, as

Ciñcāya – name of the woman

duṭṭha – angry

vacanaṃ – words

janakāya – assembly

majjhe – in the centre

santena – (by) calmness

soma – pure

6. **Saccaṃ vihāya mati saccaka vāda ketuṃ**
Vādā bhiropita manaṃ ati andha bhūtaṃ
Paññā padīpa jalito jitavā Munindo
Taṃ tejasā bhavatu te jaya maṅgalāni

Haughty Saccaka, who, ignoring truth and blinded by his own arguments, was a famous controversialist. Him did the Lord of Sages, kindling the light of wisdom, subdue. By the grace of which may joyous victory be yours.

saccaṃ – truth

vihāya – having left out, omitted

(m)ati – extra (this very)

Saccaka – name of the Brahmin

vāda ketuṃ – banner in controversy

Vādā bhiropita – having raised, having climbed up the controversy

manam – mind

ati andha – **ati** – very; **andha** – blinded (with delusion)

bhūtaṃ – (having) been

paññā – wisdom

padīpa – lamp

jalito – having lighted

7. Nando-pananda bhujagaṃ vibudhaṃ mahiddhiṃ

Puttena therā bhujagena damāpayanto

Iddhūpadesa vidhinā jītavā Munindo

Taṃ tejasā bhavatu te jaya maṅgalāni

The wise and powerful Naga Nandopananda, did the Lord of Sages cause to be subdued by the supernormal psychic powers of his disciple son – Moggallana Thera. By the grace of which may joyous victory be yours.

bhujagaṃ – serpent (**bhujaga** – beings that move on their bellies)

vibudhaṃ – very wise

mah (a) iddhi – great psychic power

puttena – (by) son **therā** – disciple

bhujagena – the Thera or Elder (sometimes referred to as “Naga”)

damāpayanto – controls, subdues

iddhūpadesa – **iddhi** – supernormal power;

upadesa – advice

8. **Duggāha diṭṭhi bhujagena sudaṭṭha hatthaṃ
Brahmaṃ visuddhi juti middhi Bakā-bhidānaṃ
Ñāna gadena vidhinā jitavā Munindo
Taṃ tejasā bhavatu te jaya maṅgalāni**

The pure radiant and majestic Brahma Baka, whose hand had once been infected with the poison of subtle heresies, did the Lord of Sages heal with His Salve of Wisdom. By the grace of which may joyous victory be yours.

Duggāha – difficult to take from, difficult to extricate
diṭṭhi – views

bhujagena – serpent

su - daṭṭha – well (deeply)/bitten

hatthaṃ – hand

Brahma – divine being

visuddhi – very pure (**vi**-very; **suddhi**-pure)

juti m – radiance

Bakā-bhidānaṃ – “Baka” by name

ñāna – knowledge

a gadena – medicine

9. **Etā’pi Buddha jaya maṅgala aṭṭha gāthā
Yo vācako dina dine sarate matandi
Hitvāna neka vividhāni c’upaddavāni
Mokkhaṃ sukhaṃ adhigameyya nara sapaṇṇo**

A wise one, who earnestly remembers and daily recites these eight Buddha-stanzas of joyous victory, will rid himself of various misfortunes and finally win the Bliss of Deliverance.

etā’pi – these

jaya maṅgala – blessings

aṭṭha – eight

gāthā – verse/stanza

yo – anyone

vācako – recites/reads

dina dine – daily

sarate – remember, recollect

(m) atandi – without being idle

hitvāna – having driven away/left

neka – many

vividhāni – various

(c) upaddavāni – troubles

mokkhaṃ sukhaṃ – bliss and happiness

adhigameyya – get, obtain

naro – man

sapañño – wise, clever

VERSES FOR TAKING REFUGE IN THE TRIPLE GEM

1. **Yo vadatam pavaro manujesu,**
Sakyamunī bhagavā katakicco;
Pāragato bala viriya samangi,
Tam sugatam saranattha mupemi.

Who are the Chief Speaker amongst mankind,
Sakya Sage, O Holy One, Whose task is Done,
Gone beyond, Possessor of power and energy;
to Thee, the Welcome One, I go for Refuge.

yo – (any) one

vadatam – speak

pavaro – great, chief

manujesu – among men

sakyamunī – sākya sage

katakicco – having completed (his) work

pāragato – gone to the other side

bala – strength

virīya – energy

samangi – having endowed with, possessing

taṃ – that, he, him

sugataṃ – the well-formed one

saranatthaṃ – for refuge

upemi – “I” go (near)

2. **Rāgavirāga maneja masokaṃ,**
Dhamma masamkhata mappa ṭikūlaṃ;
Madhuramimaṃ pagunaṃ suvibhattaṃ,
Dhammamimaṃ saranattha mupemi.

Exempt from lust – from craving, Sorrow-free,
Law unconditioned and delectable,
Sweet, potent, profoundly analytic;
to this very Dhamma I go for Refuge.

rāga – craving, lust

virāga (m) – leaving the lust

maneja (m) – not moving, firm

asokaṃ – without sorrow, happy

asamkhataṃ – unconditioned, Nibbana

appa ṭikūlaṃ – pure, non-repulsive

madhuraṃ – sweet

imaṃ – this

pagunaṃ – well-practised

suvibhattaṃ – well-analysed

3. **Yattha ca dinna mahapphala māhu**
Catusu sucīsu purisa yugesū;
Aṭṭha ca puggala dhamma dasāte,
Sanghamimam saranattha mupemi.

Whatever is given bears great fruit, 'tis said,
to four Pure Pairs of Persons and
these Eight are people who have realized the Truth;
to this very Sangha I go for Refuge.

yattha – where

ca – (joining word)

dinna – given

mahapphala (m) – great fruit

ahu – it is said

dhamma dasa – understood the Doctrine

te – they

catusu – in four

sucīsu – pure

purisa – man

yugesū – pairs

aṭṭha ca – eight

puggala – individuals

NINE GREAT VIRTUES OF THE BUDDHA NAVA GUNA GĀTHĀ

1. **Araham** arahoti **nāmena**
Araham **pāpam** **nakāraye**
Arahatta **phalam** **patto**
Araham **nāma** **te namo**

By name He is Arahant as He is Worthy; even in secret He does no evil. He attained the fruit of Arahantship; to Thee the Worthy One, my homage be.

nāmena – by name

pāpam – demerit, unwholesome deeds

nakāraye – not to do, to abstain

2. **Sammā sambuddha** **nāmena**
Sammā sambuddha **desanā**
Sammā sambuddha **lokasmim**
Sammā Sambuddha **te namo**

By name He is **Sammā sambuddha**, the Teaching is of the **Sammā sambuddha**, a Fully Enlightened One is He in the world; to Thee, the Fully Enlightened One, my homage be.

desanā – doctrine

te – to him

lokasmim – in the world

namo – adore, salute

3. **Vijjā carana** **sampanno**,
Tassa vijjā **pakāsītā**;
Atītā **nāga** **tuppanno**
Vijjā carana **te namo**.

He is endowed with wisdom and knowledge, His wisdom has made known, the past and future He knows; to Thee who is endowed with wisdom and knowledge, my homage be.

vijjā – knowledge

carana – conduct

sampanno – endowed with

tassa – his

pakāsitā – expounded, proclaim

atīta – past

anāgata – future

uppanna - present

4. **Sugato sugatattānam,**
Sugato sundaram pi ca;
Nibbānam sugatim yanti,
Sugato nāma te namo.

He is Sugata being self-disciplined, being good He is Sugata,
He has gone to the good state of Nibbana; to Thee, the Sugata,
my homage be.

Sugato – well-formed body

sugatattānam – having gone to Nibbana

sundaram – good, well

(pi ca) – conjunction (in the usage)

yanti – goes

5. **Lokavidūti nāmena,**
Atitā nāgate vidū;
Sankhārasatta mokāse,
Lokavidū nāma te namo.

By name He is Lokavidu, He knows the past and future; things, beings and space He knows; to Thee, the knower of worlds, my homage be.

lokavidu (ti) – knower of the world

sankhāra – conditioned things

atīta – past

satta – beings

anāgate – future

okase – space

6. **Anuttaro ñāna sīlena,
Yo lokassa anuttaro;
Anuttaro pūja lokasmim,
Taṃ namassāmi anuttaro.**

By wisdom and conduct He is unrivalled; an unrivalled One is He in the world; in this world He is revered as an Incomparable One; that Incomparable One, I salute.

ñāna – knowledge

pūja lokasmim – worthy of offering

sīlena – (by) morality, virtue, conduct in the world

yo lokassa – one, to the world

namassāmi – “I” adore

anuttaro – incomparable

7. **Sārathī sārathī devā,
Yo lokassa sārathī;
Sārathi pūja lokasmin,
Taṃ namassāmi sārathi.**

A Charioteer, a charioteer is He of Deva. He is a charioteer

to the world. He is a respected charioteer in this world; that charioteer, I salute.

Sāraṭhī – charioteer, trainer

deva – deity, spirit, divine being

namassāmi – “I” adore

8. **Deva yakkha manussānaṃ,**
Loke agga phalaṃ dadāṃ;
Dadantaṃ damayantānaṃ,
Purisa jañña te namo.

To devas, yakkhas and men in this world, He gives the highest fruits, the giver. He subdues; to the Knower of men, my homage be.

yakkha – demon, devil

dadaṃ – giving

manussānaṃ – to men

damayantānaṃ – trainer

loke – in the world

purisa – man

agga – chief, great

phalaṃ – fruit

a jañña – chief

9. **Bhagavā bhagavā yutto,**
Bhaggaṃ kilesa vāhato;
Bhaggaṃ samsāra muttāro,
Bhagavā nāma te namo.

The Bhagava is replete with fortune, He has destroyed all passions. He has crossed the ocean of Samsara. to that Bhagava, my homage be.

Bhagavā – Blessed One

kilesa – defilement

yutto – having

vāhato – destroying

bhaggam – destroying

samsāram – wheel/round of rebirth

muttāro – (mutta + (a) ro) : destroying + spikes

destroying the spokes of the wheel of the “**samsarā**”

TEACHER'S GUIDE

THE DISCOURSE ON GREAT BLESSINGS MAHĀ-MAṄGALA SUTTA

The Buddha uttered the following Sutta to explain the attainment to real blessing. The Sutta itself tells us of the background and the significance of this famous Discourse. The Buddha clarified the doubts of the Devas (gods) when they wanted to know what constituted a real blessing. In the Buddhist sense “blessing” is not something which is given by a divine being, but a state of well-being which arises within oneself when one lives righteously, maintains human dignity, and creates a healthy environment. It is customary to recite this Sutta on auspicious occasions. This Sutta is not just for recital. Devotees must also understand its meaning and put its principles into practice. It is by practising the advice given in this Sutta that one can receive “blessings”.

Here, we find the ethical, moral and spiritual Teachings of the Master for the guidance of devotees. The Discourse tells us that the Buddha’s Teachings are not confined to the philosophical and psychological aspects of the religion but extends to the field of social service and the cultivation of self-discipline. Since these verses are supposed to be the original Words of the Buddha, Buddhist devotees have high respect for them and confidence in them.

THE JEWEL DISCOURSE RATANA SUTTA

In the days of the Supremely Enlightened Buddha, the city of Vesali was the capital of the Vajji Kingdom of the Licchavis. This was among the 16 great Kingdoms that flourished at that time in India. The Kingdom of Vajji received extensive admiration at that time. It is believed that the world’s first Republic existed in the Vajji Kingdom. The Licchavi Kings ruled their land not as all-powerful monarchs, but as leaders who upheld democratic ideals. The Supremely Enlightened Buddha spent His Fifth Rainy Season, after He attained Enlightenment, at the Domed Hall, in the city of Vesali. Several well-known Discourses including **Mahā**

Sihanaāda Sutta, **Tevijja Sutta**, and **Mahāli Sutta** were delivered in the city of Vesali.

The city of Vesali, which had been a centre of prosperity and well-being over a long period of time, was overwhelmed by a totally unexpected disaster. This came in the wake of a prolonged drought. Trees withered and died. The farmlands and all vegetation swiftly turned into arid desert. When this calamity affected the city an epidemic spread around. Along with all this, the city was threatened by demons. This way, the three fears – the fear of drought, the fear of diseases and the fear from demons, overwhelmed the dwellers of the city of Vesali.

The poor and the destitute died at first. The stench of discarded cadavers attracted the demons. The death-toll increased. The epidemic “Ahi Vataka” began to spread everywhere. Those who escaped death, assembled before the rulers and clamoured, saying that, this disaster, the like of which had never occurred before, came about due to an error in their rule. The rulers had the ministers and the army assembled, and asked the masses to speak publicly if there was any fault on the part of the rulers. They did not have even a vestigial fault of the rulers to point to. After extensive deliberation they decided that the Buddha should be invited to visit the City. Seeing with His Supreme wisdom, that His visit to the affected city will benefit men, He accepted the invitation. The Enlightened One set out with a retinue of 500 monks. The Licchavi rulers had prepared a ship to enable the Buddha to cross the river and reach the city of Vesali.

Just as the Enlightened One entered the Vajji Kingdom, rain clouds gathered in the sky on all four directions. Heavy rains began to fall. The floods washed away the dead bodies and all the accumulated garbage and cleansed the city.

The withered trees began to green as if they had received a new life. It took three days to travel from the bank of the river to the city of Vesali. With the heavy rains, the drought ended. The Supreme Buddha summoned Venerable Ananda and taught him the Jewel

Discourse. With that, he sent out Venerable Ananda to chant the Jewel Discourse throughout the city of Vesali.

Ven. Ananda, mastering the Jewel Discourse, traveled throughout the city of Vesali, accompanied by Licchavi Princes. He sprinkled water from the alms bowl of the Supreme Buddha, reciting stanzas of the Jewel Discourse. After completing the recital of the first two stanzas, Venerable Ananda started to recite the third stanza.

Immediately he began the phrase “**Yamkinci Vittam**” some of the demons quickly made their escape through the city-gates. This way, the fear from the demons ended. After the completion of the recital of the stanza, that begins with the line “**Khīnaṃ purāṇaṃ navaṃ natthi sambhavaṃ**”, the **Ahivātaka** disease that afflicted the people vanished, as if wafted away by the wind.

The masses, over-joyed by this, constructed a decorated hall at the centre of the city, and had the Buddha and His retinue of 500 monks seated in it. The Supreme Buddha chanted the Jewel Discourse once again. At the end of the chanting 84,000 people realized the Dhamma. After that, the Discourse was chanted daily for six days. With that, the Buddha left for the city of Rajagaha, blessing the people of Vesali.

METTA SUTTA DISCOURSE ON LOVING-KINDNESS

This Sutta was uttered by the Buddha when he gave instructions to 500 monks on how to radiate loving-kindness to every living being. These monks went in to a jungle to practise meditation but were disturbed and frightened by certain spirits whereupon they returned and reported to the Buddha. The Buddha then advised the monks to go back to the same place but armed with the sword of metta (Loving-kindness) for their protection. In order to teach them how to practise this loving – kindness the Buddha delivered this sutta. The monks then returned to the jungle and radiated their loving – kindness to those spirits and

thereafter they continued with their meditation without any hindrance. These same spirits who had earlier created disturbances later repented and paid their respects to the monks.

This is therefore an important sutta for the devotees to recite and radiate their loving-kindness to every living being. By doing so they could overcome any disturbances and thus find peace and happiness for themselves, and help others also to live peacefully by practicing this great virtue.

The word ‘maitri’ or metta “Loving kindness.” Accordingly, the form of meditation which helps one to acquire the ability to consider all beings in this world including animals as one’s friends is **Metta Bhāvanā**.

“May all beings be happy, May all beings be healthy, May all beings be well –extension of such thoughts towards all beings whether they be relatives or non-relatives, friends or enemies, humans or animals is **Metta Bhāvanā**.

Wishing happiness towards humans alone does not mean Maitri . The true Maitri constitutes the wishing of happiness to the entire world including even the smallest of living things. The Buddha is the supreme example of Maitri in this world. Irrespective of their being friends or enemies, humans or non-humans, Maitri is a merit of high order. It is one of the perfections (**pāramitā**) for the attainment of supreme enlightenment (**Sammā Sambodhi**).

According to the discourse of Khanda sutta no harm could be caused by serpents or wild animals if loving-kindness is extended towards them.

The benefits of **Metta Bhāvanā** are dealt with, in the discourse of the Mettanisansa. Therein are given eleven benefits of practicing **Metta Bhāvanā** .

1. Comfortable sleep

He who practises Metta sleeps happily. As he goes to sleep with a light heart free from hatred he naturally falls asleep at once. This fact is clearly demonstrated by those who are full of loving-kindness. They are fast asleep immediately on closing their eyes.

2. Waking up comfortably

As he goes to sleep with a loving heart he awakes with an equally loving heart. Benevolent and compassionate persons often rise from bed with smiling faces.

3. Not having bad dreams

Even in sleep, loving persons are not perturbed by bad dreams. As they are full of love during their waking hours, they are peaceful in their sleeping hours too. Either they fall in to deep sleep or have pleasant dreams.

4. Being loved by all humans

He becomes dear to human beings. As he loves others, so do others love him. When a person looks in to a mirror with a smiling face, a similar face, a similar face will greet him. If, on the contrary, he looks with a wry face, he will see a similar reflection. The outside world reacts on one in the same way that one acts towards the world. One full of faults himself is apt to see the evil in others. The good he ignores.

Why should we see the ugliness in others when there is evil in the best of us and good in the worst of us? It would be a source of pleasure to all, if we could see the good and beautiful in all.

5. Being loved by non human

He who practices Metta is dear to non human as well. Animals are also attracted to him. Radiating their loving-kindness, ascetics live in wild forests amidst ferocious beasts without being harmed by them.

6. Protection by Gods

Invisible deities protect him because of the power of his metta.

7. Not being subject to danger from fire, poisons and weapons

Owing to his power of metta he becomes immune from poison and so forth unless he is subject to some inexorable kamma.

As metta is a constructive healthy force it has the power to contract hostile influences. Just as hateful thoughts can produce toxic effects in the system, even so loving thoughts can produce healthy physical effects.

When the Buddha visited His birthplace for the first time, His son Rahula, who was only seven years of age, approached Him and spontaneously remarked: O ascetic, even your shadow is pleasing to me. The child was so much dominated by the Buddha's Metta that he deeply felt its magnetic power.

8. Mental poise

Metta leads to quick mental concentration. As the mind is not perturbed by hostile vibrations one pointendness can be gained with ease. With mind at peace he will live in a heaven of his own creation. Even those who come in contact with him will also experience that bliss.

9. Brightness of facial complexion

Metta tends to beautify one's facial expression. The face as a rule reflects the state of the mind. When one gets angry, the heart pumps blood twice or three times faster than the normal rate. Heated blood rushes up to the face, which then turns red or black. At such times the face becomes repulsive to sight. Loving thoughts, on the contrary, gladden the heart and clarify the blood. The face then presents a lovable appearance.

It is stated that when the Buddha, after Enlightenment, reflected on the casual Relations (patthana), his heart was so pacified and his blood yellow, red white orange, and a mixture of these emanated from His body.

10. Ability to face death without fear

A person imbued with metta dies peacefully as he harbours no thought of hatred towards any. Even after death his serene face reflects his peaceful death.

11. Rebirth in the Brahma world

The birth in the Brahma world after death for one who has developed concentration and who was not able to attain Arahantship in this life.

Since a person with metta dies happily, he will subsequently be born in a blissful state. If he gained the Jhanas (ecstasies), he will be born in a Brahma realm.

It is very significant that out of these eleven benefits ten could be obtained in this very life.

SALUTATION TO THE BUDDHA VANDANĀ

It is the duty of every Buddhist to pay homage to the Buddha before the commencement of any Buddhist recital. The sentences in **Pāli** should be recited thrice and only after that does one take refuge in the Triple Gem. This is done as a mark of respect for the great virtues and wisdom of the Buddha in order to gain confidence, devotion and inspiration in the Buddha.

TAKING THE THREE REFUGES TI-SARAṆA

To become a Buddhist one must take refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and the Sangha for one's guidance. All those who are already Buddhists are encouraged to reiterate the acceptance of this Holy Triple Gem – Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha – in their daily life.

The Buddha was the holiest, most virtuous, wisest and most spiritually perfect personality who had ever lived. His Dhamma (Doctrine) is the Ultimate Truth about the Universe which explains the real nature of the world and of life as well. The Sangha refers to all the priestly disciples of the Buddha who have entered the Brotherhood. It also refers to the Holy Order of the Buddha, whose members lead the religious life and who are responsible for preserving His original Teachings.

By declaring one's willingness to be guided by the Holy Triple Gem one should not be led to think that one will thereby be mentally enslaved. Every one must have some guidance for his spiritual development, but one must never give up one's right to think freely, intelligently, and respectfully in response to whatever is taught in the name of religion.

Every religion has certain sacred objects of veneration in which its followers are expected to have confidence. It is the fervent acceptance of these sacred objects which awakens the religious impulse in men and which in turn inspires them to lead a religious life.

THE FIVE PRECEPTS

PAÑCA SILA

The five precepts are recited and observed by every Buddhist the first thing in the morning and the last thing at night. These precepts are also recited before the commencement of all Buddhist meetings or gatherings. By reciting these before the commencement of any meeting or activity, Buddhists are reminded to observe these principles and to purify their minds while carrying out their responsibilities.

Buddhists do not regard these precepts as commandments but observe them voluntarily. At the same time, they do not believe that there will be divine punishment for those who do not follow the precepts; although those who violate these universal principles have to face the consequences according to the natural laws of cause and effect. Every Buddhist must remember these noble precepts in his daily life and try to live up to them.

If Buddhists adjust their way of life according to these five precepts, they can, on one hand, live happily and peacefully in this world, and on the other hand, help others to live likewise. To observe the precepts is like putting up a fence to protect one's house against robbers. A person without virtue not only endangers himself but also others around him.

These precepts indicate the five arterial directions in which a Buddhist has to exercise his self-control. Thus the first rule calls upon him to control the passion of anger, the second the desire for material possessions, the third the lust of the flesh, the fourth, cowardice and malevolence (the causes of untruthfulness) and the fifth, the craving for unwholesome excitement.

The practice of precepts helps one to cultivate five ennobling virtues which correspond to each of the precepts. The first is the cultivation of compassion; the second, generosity and non-attachment; the third contentment; the fourth truthfulness, and the fifth, mindfulness and clarity of the mind.

Every Buddhist should observe these five precepts in order to elevate himself morally and spiritually. Morality is the first step in the path towards eternal bliss. It is the basic spiritual foundation. Without this base, there can be no human progress and spiritual advancement.

After establishing the moral foundation, a person can proceed to develop his mind and wisdom. This practice will lead him from the lower levels to the progressively higher levels of mental development, and finally, to the summit of all attainments – Enlightenment.

VERSES FOR PAYING HOMAGE TO THE TRIPLE GEM BUDDHA, DHAMMA AND SANGHA TIRATANA VANDANÂ

These verses are recited to pay homage to the Triple Gem – Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. These words explain some of the great qualities and virtues pertaining to the Triple Gem. By reciting these words, one can understand the admirable qualities of the Triple Gem and so develop one's confidence in their intrinsic worth.

The Buddha Himself explained these qualities in many of His Suttas. He also advised the devotees to recite these words to be mindful of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha in times of fear or disturbance, whether arising from external sources or through evil influences so that such disturbances can be vanquished. This is because the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha are free from all kinds of defilements and hindrances such as greed, anger and ignorance.

OFFERINGS PŪJÂ

These verses are recited when making offerings of lights, flowers, water, food, fruit juice, incense, etc. The offering of these things in the name of the Buddha is yet another practice, the meaning of which some people fail to understand. Offering of such things to a holy man is in fact

an oriental custom. Even during the Buddha's time, it was customary among Indian people to carry some flowers whenever they visited a holy man. This is only done as a mark of respect. Devout Buddhists likewise always offer some thing in the name of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. This symbolic act gives them a sense of happiness, peace and relief. At the same time understanding Buddhists often use the same offerings as objects of their meditation. They are fully aware that these physical objects are simply representations of things spiritual.

The flame of the candle or oil lamp and the flowers could each be compared to the physical body or life. The offering of light symbolises the dispelling of darkness or ignorance through light. The existence of the flame and its brightness, the beauty of the flowers, the aroma of incense and the final fading away of such brightness and beauty only manifest their impermanence, hence all these natural phenomena could be taken up as suitable objects for meditation. The flowers on the altar represent one of the most beautiful and yet one of the most transient of the forms of nature.

These offerings symbolise meritorious deeds because of the wholesome and devout mental states they induce. Therefore, time spent in a shrine room in offering some of these articles and reciting some verses is not at all wasted. The devotees' pious acts have the effect of pleasing themselves and calming the mind. It is good to start our daily work after offering some of these objects to the Buddha as a mark of respect to the holy religious Teacher who has shown us the correct Path for our peace, happiness and salvation.

However, Buddhists should not be satisfied by simply offering something in the name of the Buddha and reciting in a parrot-fashion some verses or Suttas thinking that their duty has been done. To become good Buddhists they have to do something more; they have to correct themselves by following the Buddha's advice. Try to gain more knowledge and understanding through His Teaching. One should not think by just offering something to the Buddha one's wrong doings can be eradicated.

SALUTATION TO THE THREE MAIN OBJECTS OF VENERATION

In many a temple throughout the world, a pagoda or “chetiya” is regarded as a sacred object deserving veneration and homage. This beautiful piece of Buddhist architecture is not meant merely for a decorative purpose but to enshrine the relics, images and other valuable sacred remains of the Buddha and His holy disciples. In different countries, pagodas take on various shapes depending on the national characteristics of their architecture. These religious symbols for veneration are very important for Buddhists to cultivate devotion towards their religion. Visible religious objects give inspiration to devotees, create a religious atmosphere at that place, and sanctify the place for the performance of religious activities as well as the observance of discipline. This verse is recited in paying homage to the three main objects of veneration, namely, the pagoda, the great Bodhi Tree and the image of the Buddha.

ASPIRATION OR WISH PATTHANĀ

A fervent wish takes the place of prayer in Buddhism. According to the Buddha the strong aspiration of a man is bound to achieve its desired result. Firm determination and a strong will could therefore always fulfil a man’s and a woman’s aspiration. A wish has more the function of contemplation and meditation rather than a petition or supplication. A wish may take the form of some intense desire, such as the aspiration for purity, but the psychological machinery will not operate unless the idea permeates to the mind.

It is customary among Buddhists after performing a meritorious deed to have an aspiration for their own benefit and also for the welfare of others. By doing this, they will be able to continue their spiritual well-being and development in the right direction. They can thus prepare the ground for their future rebirth to take effect in a more congenial place. Those who develop such aspiration or wish will be able to maintain their

noble way of life hereafter until they attain their final liberation. Without such an aspiration, Nibbana will not be achieved.

FORGIVENESS OF SHORTCOMINGS

KHAMATHA ME BHANTE

For many people, seeking forgiveness for their sins is the most important aspect of religion. Since Buddhists deny this kind of confession, some people ask why we recite something to confess. Buddhists recite the following verse not with the purpose of confessing their sins but to recognise and admit to themselves their shortcomings.

By not practising mindfulness constantly in our daily activities, we impede our own spiritual progress. When we allow our mind to dwell on unwholesome thoughts, we may even commit grievous wrong.

Reciting a verse to re-cast our mind with wholesome thoughts will provide both relief and mental strength to stop repeating our failings. By expressing our thoughts this way and by recognising our fallibility, we encourage others to do likewise for their spiritual self-improvement. Having such an attitude helps us to guard our thoughts, speech and actions regardless of whether we are at sacred places or in the presence of holy persons.

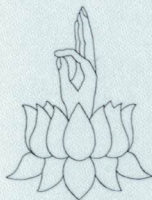
STANZAS OF VICTORY

JAYA MAṄGALA GĀTHĀ

Recital for Blessings and Prosperity on Significant Occasions

These verses are recited by Buddhist devotees in many Buddhist countries on auspicious occasions such as weddings, housewarming ceremonies, felicitations and various kinds of blessing services. Children could be taught to sing the verses to the accompaniment of musical instruments.

These eight verses recall the great events which took place between the Buddha and His powerful opponents, who have tried to kill Him, to humiliate Him and defeat Him, and how the Buddha overcame all these disturbances calmly and peacefully through the merits of His great virtues, and finally, how he converted His opponents into following the righteous way of living. Each verse is based on a beautiful story. One who recites these verses regularly and mindfully following the example given by the Buddha, can overcome many difficulties.



Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre

No. 1, Jalan Mas Puteh

Singapore 128607

Tel: 7783330 Fax: 7730150

E-Mail: wsarada@pacific.net.sg

ISBN: 981-05-4088-4